

QA54 – Prescription for Supplements

QUESTION:

For a young infant or tube-feeding individual and others, I recognize the need for a doctor's order. Usually it is no problem when I explain the need. However, for an older child, or toddler, who needs a supplement, is it necessary to get a doctor's order to add PediaSure three times a day to increase calories?

(For any consult, I would provide necessary information for the chart)

ANSWER:

If the supplement is paid for by insurance, the insurance plan may require a prescription or physician's order before the bill is reimbursed. Three cans of PediaSure (~750 calories) is probably a significant source of energy for a toddler or young child. If the child is unable to consume an adequate amount of food (indicated by the need for a supplement), then the supplement is part of his medical therapy and should be supported by the child's physician.

You could suggest that a family purchase PediaSure without a physician's order. (Institutional policy around this point may vary.) However, because communication between team members is critical to effective care, it is probably helpful to keep the physician "in the loop."